Duane F. Watson and Terrance Callan, ***First and Second Peter*** **(*Paideia Commentaries on the New Testament*)**, Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012.

Duane Watson of Malone University is the author of the commentary on First Peter in this volume and Terrance Callan of The Athenaeum of Ohio authors the exposition of Second Peter. In their expositions both follow the methodological format of discussing and describing each pericopae in terms of its 'Introductory Matters', 'Tracing the Train of Thought' and 'Theological Issues'. The heart of the exposition is found in their 'Tracing the Train of Thought'. This is where explanation proper takes place.

Watson's exposition of 1 Peter is excellently done. His treatment of the usual critical issues of authorship, date, and purpose is on point and neither 'Fundamentalist' nor 'Radical'. So, for instance, he writes

> Modern biblical scholarship has proposed that 1 Peter is pseudonymous… [And] The existence of the *Apocalypse of Peter* and the *Gospel of Peter* from the mid- to late second century illustrates the propensity to use Peter's name for pseudonymous works (p. 4).

But, he continues, there are good reasons for suggesting that Peter himself did in fact write the letter:

> … the Greek style and rhetoric could be ascribed to the amanuensis (p. 4).

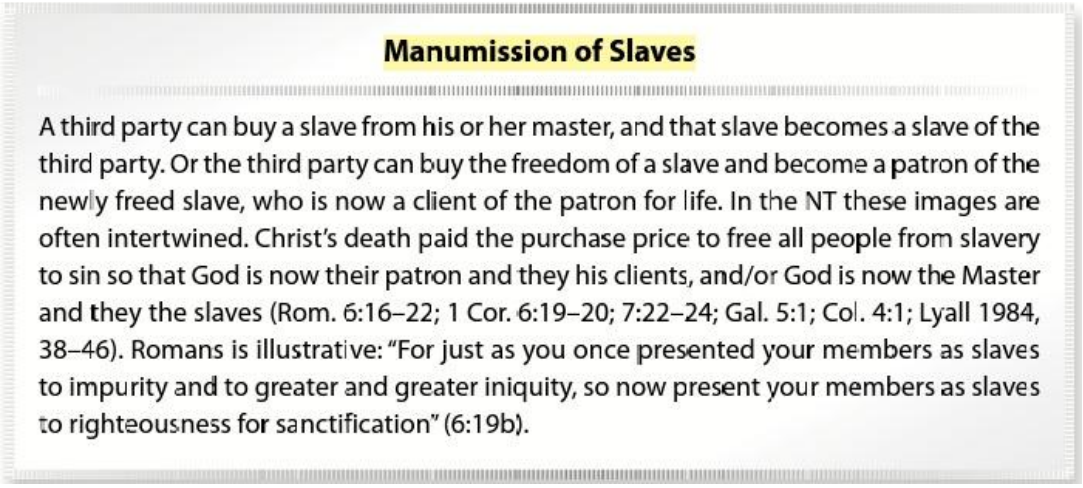
After further discussion he concludes concerning authorship

> I do not find these and other arguments for the pseudonymous authorship of 1 Peter convincing and consider the author to be the apostle Peter (p. 5).

While the 'knee-jerk' reaction of many may be to reject that suggestion as either naïve or fundamentalistic, Watson's reasoning is sound and his explanation deserves a serious hearing.

When it comes to the proper date of the letter, after examining the issues, Watson opines:
… I am assigning 1 Peter to the quiet period before the Neronian persecution of 64-68… (p. 6).

Along with the exposition of each pericope the author includes a number of 'sidebars' like this one on the manumission of slaves:



Manumission of Slaves

A third party can buy a slave from his or her master, and that slave becomes a slave of the third party. Or the third party can buy the freedom of a slave and become a patron of the newly freed slave, who is now a client of the patron for life. In the NT these images are often intertwined. Christ's death paid the purchase price to free all people from slavery to sin so that God is now their patron and they his clients, and/or God is now the Master and they the slaves (Rom. 6:16–22; 1 Cor. 6:19–20; 7:22–24; Gal. 5:1; Col. 4:1; Lyall 1984, 38–46). Romans is illustrative: "For just as you once presented your members as slaves to impurity and to greater and greater iniquity, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness for sanctification" (6:19b).

Turning our attention to the exposition itself, Watson continues to demonstrate a profound understanding of both the text of 1 Peter and the environment in which it came into being. Tackling the knotty problem of the 'submission of wives to their husbands' (1 Pet 3:7) so widely discussed in certain quarters today, he writes

> The use of the adverb "in turn" … here is a simple connective (cf. 3:1, 5:5) and does not imply that the husband is to be subject to his wife as she is to be subject to him (p. 76).

And that is correct. Watson doesn't attempt to force Peter to sound like a modern feminist advocating for the rights of the woman to be the same as the rights of her husband. That simply wasn't Peter's world. But Watson continues

> The subjection of a wife to her husband is here enjoined, to lessen conflict over a radical change within an existing marriage. This counsel was given in a strongly patriarchal society and has a patriarchal bias. As such it is not necessarily applicable to modern Christian marriage nor a theological principle for marriage for all time (p. 78).

And

> The culture-bound nature of this passage can be transcended for mutuality in Christian marriage. We have already transcended the master-slave relationship in our culture over the past two hundred years… (p. 79).

Watson's entire contribution is engaging and intelligent. Callan's too, for his exposition of 2 Peter is just as nicely and competently done as Watson's of 1 Peter. He takes readers 'by the hand', as it were (and yet not condescendingly) through the authorship debate and the discussion about the nature and purpose of the letter. He insists that 2 Peter has many affinities with the testamentary literature

so popular among Jews and Christians (using as one of his several examples the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*):

> The testamentary character of 2 Peter is especially clear in 1:12-15… (p. 131).

But Callan doesn't simply rehearse the well known (though he is, in my opinion, overly dependent on the work of Richard Bauckham). He offers intriguing explanations for several issues, including the linguistic style of 2 Peter-

> The poetic rhythm of 2 Peter … probably results from the author's attempt to write in the style known as Asianism. … This was one of two principle tendencies in Greek prose style that flourished in the rhetorical schools during the Hellenistic and Roman periods; the other was Atticism. Unfortunately, few examples of Asianism survive, and we derive our understanding of it largely from hostile criticism of it. Just as Asianism was criticized in its own time, many today find the style of 2 peter unappealing (p. 134).

The author of the book wasn't Peter, but a disciple of his, who wrote

> … sometime between 100 and 140, perhaps about 125… (p. 136).

When he turns to discuss the similarities between Jude 4-18 and 2 Peter, he notes that 2 Peter

> … thoroughly recontextualizes Jude 4-18 (p. 140).

Indeed, one of the most helpful aspects of Callan's introduction to 2 Peter is his 'Figure 12: Parallels Between Jude and 2 Peter:

Figure 12. Parallels between Jude and 2 Peter

(underlined words are identical; italicized words are different forms of the same root)

Jude 4–18 (NRSV, adapted)	2 Peter 2:1–3:3
	2:1 But there were also false prophets among the *people*, as among you there will also be false teachers, who
4 For certain intruders have stolen in among you, people who *long ago* were designated for this judgment as ungodly, who pervert the grace of our God into *licentiousness*	will secretly introduce heresies of *destruction*,
even denying our only master and Lord, Jesus Christ.	even denying the master who purchased them, bringing on themselves imminent *destruction*.
	2:2 And many will follow their *licentiousnesses*, because of whom the way of truth will be slandered.
	2:3 And in their greed they will buy you with counterfeit words, whose judgment *long ago* is not idle and their *destruction* does not sleep.
5 Now I desire to remind you, though you are fully informed, that the Lord, who once for all saved a *people* out of the land of Egypt, afterward *destroyed* those who did not believe.	
6 And *the angels* who did not keep their own position, but left their proper dwelling, *he has*	2:4 For if God did not spare *the angels* who sinned but, having cast them into Tartarus,

And so for several pages.

The bibliography which concludes the volume is extensive and up to date and the indices are very complete. On a more technical note I'll simply observe that the font used is terribly good and a pleasant reprieve from some of the fonts used in many modern publications. The size of the font, too, is just perfect.

In all, this is a quite impressive achievement both in terms of the contents of the book and the way in which that content is presented to the reader. This is a commendable, well written, enjoyable addition to any library. I have no complaints with it at all.

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